POLAR EXPEDITIONS

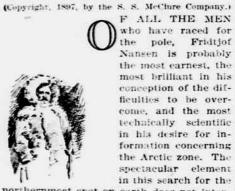
Nansen's Ideas as to What May Yet Be Accomplished.

HOW THE ARCTIC CAN BE EXPLORED

Something About the Personal Side of the Hardy Norseman.

AN EARNEST SCIENTIST

Written for The Evening Star



in this search for the st spot on earth does not interest him. His greatest desire is that his arctic explorations may enable him to prove some scientific theories and point out some scientific facts. Concerning this point we are enabled to quote from a magazine article written by him and soon to be published, his ideas of the practical utility of reaching the north pole. He says:

"There are a good many scientific researches which are much needed in the polar regions. I may mention here magnetic and meteorological observations. The magnetism of the earth and its strange changes has been and is a riddle and we do not yet know much about this mysterious force. The greatest lack in our knowledge about it is, however, that we have not sufficient magnetic observations from the polar regions. We need continuous observations carried on for years there. On board the Fram we got a con-tinuous series for three years; other expeditions have also brought back valuable material; but this is not sufficient. We should also have it from every part of the unknown north, and we cannot possibly get too much. It is not necessary to point out the importance of knowledge of this kind, it is not only that the importance of knowledge of the kind. kind. It is not only that the magnetic nee-ale points to the sailor his way from land to land and from harber to harber; but the knowledge of the terrestrial magnetism has in many other ways been of great benefit to mankind; it has been one of the step-

The Arctic Situation.

"As to meteorology, it is now generally understood of what great importance this science really is; but it is still in its infancy, and none of us can tell what it will have in the future, when it has been further developed, and we can more fully explain the various cilmatic changes. In order to understand these, however, we need a complete knowledge of the physical con-ditions of the atmosphere in all parts of the surface of the earth. We have now ob-tained a tolerably good knowledge in this respect of the known regions, and we have meteorological stations almost everywhere In the inhabited part of the globe. But the polar regions still remain, and I cannot emphasize too much the importance of further research there, as the atmospheriel conditions are so diverse from those pre-vailing in better known regions. We need to know what influence those extended snow and fee-covered tracts with the long polar day and the long polar night have on the atmosphere, and we shall not be able to Explain the atmospheric changes in our own latitudes before we know more about

"Is it of any special use to reach the orth pole itself? I think it is. Not because this mathematical point has any special interest or has any special scientific value different from all other point in the unknown north, but because it has for centuries been the ambition of sea-faring nations to reach this point and there plant their flag, and before this is done the race for the pole will never cease. It also certainly is below the dignity of man to erect a goal and then give it up before it is reached. I believe it can be before it is reached. I believe it can be reached without too great difficulties, not enly by a ship drifting with the tee across the polar sea, as mentioned above, but also by the help of dogs and sledges from the Greenland side. It is to be hoped that it will not be long before this point is caused. As long as we have talk it begained. As long as we have tals Holy Grail beckening us in the north we are all of us apt to forget that it is scientific research which ought to be the sole object of all explorations.

How the Arctic May Be Explored. "How can this unknown region be explored? I think there are various ways in which it ought to be done, as each of them will certainly bring important results. I think the drift of the Fram has clearly proved the efficiency of the mode of travel which we adopted. That a ship can be built able to withstand the pressure to built able to withstand the pressure to which it would necessarily be subjected on a drift through these regions, is established. It can scarcely be doubted that the Fram was exposed to difficulties of this kind as great as can reasonably be expected. I believe, therefore, that the expected. I believe, therefore, that the polar sea can at all times be travesed with sufficient safety in this manner, if only proper provisions be made. Furthermore, this method of travel offers such great administration of the property of the polar to the same travel of the provision of the p vantages that it certainly ought to be adopted in the future, as the drift of a ship like the Fram through unknown gions afferds the best means of making scientific investigations of all kinds. It is only by a sojourn of years that suffi-cient material can be collected to enable a fully satisfactory conception of the physleal conditions of these regions be formed. A vessel like the Fram is, in fact, an ex-

ellent floating observatory.
"I think that such an expedition ought to go north through Bering strait and enter the ice in a northerly or perhaps, rather northeasterly direction, somewhe between 160 and 170 west longitude. T ship will then be closed in by the ice, and will certainly be carried across the unknown sea a great distance north of the Fram's route, across, or, at any rate, not far from the pole itself, and will emerge into open water somewhere along the easi coast of Greenland. The expedition will thus bring a sum of information about the polar region which will be of priceless benefit to many branches of science." The man who can thus lay out for himself such a course of scientific research must surely be interesting in his person The truth of this is well attested to Richard Heard, whose friend he is

Mr. Heard tells many stories which are characteristic of the great explorer.

Nearly Became a College Professor "It is not generally known," says Mr. Heard, "that Nansen once came near relinquishing his north pole project through the agency of a college in Indiana. While we were traveling through Indiana one day Nansen said. This is the place where I nearly became a college professor. I ask-ed him what he meant. He said: ed him what he meant. He said:
"They offered me the professorship of goology in the university here, and I came

very near accepting it. uplating my first trip to Greenland, and It was a question with me as to whether should go to America and take this professorship, or undertake my expedition to Greenland. It required a great deal of de my expedition to liberation, but finally I made up my mind and declined the professorship.

"The inside facts of Nansen's early life

are not publicly known, but he was as brilliant a boy as he is a man. We started out the other day for a quiet trip to Niagara to see the falls, and while in a trolle car Nansen was talking of mathematics.

"'When I was a boy,' he said, 'I solved some problems which had never before been solved. They thought they were go-ing to make a mathematician of me.' I said that was news to me, and asked what were the problems. Then he hem-med and hawed, for he didn't remember English word for expressing his mean ing; but finally I asked him if he could tell

is, conic sections. It seems that Nansen, as a boy, succeeded in solving several prob-

'Kegelschnitt,' he sa d-that

lems in conic sections by means of geometry, and some of his solutions are still used in the colleges of Norway. In his leisure moments he had a trial at squaring the circle. In his youth he also studied to be an artist and carried his studies pretty far. He did a good deal of sketching and painting. This early practice is showing to good advantage in the charts which he ex-hibits at lectures, and has led to the pro-duction of pictures of articlescence and cal-

hibits at lectures, and has led to the production of pictures of arctic scene and color such as have never been equaled.

"After these early studies, he went in for zoology and took up other scientific pursuits. While at a banquet, given Nansen some time ago Prof. Carl Lumholtz told me that before he had known Nansen as an explorer he had been studying a book on the nerve system of animals. In this book the author printed a new theory of book the author printed a new theory of the nervous system, different from any previously held. Since that time leading anatomists have proved that this theory was correct. The man who wrote that book was Nansen.

His Theories of Zoology.

"A few days after the banquet I got hold of Nansen in the railroad car and asked him for an explanation of his discov-

ery. He said: "That was when I was curator of the Museum of Anatomy in Bergen. I made a special study of the animal brain and examined thousands of brains microscopically. That was the happest time of my life, and I should like to go back to it now. Well, I discovered that the seat of the south animals, contrary to the human brain, was not in the nerve center, where it had been supposed to be, but at another point of the brain. He then went into technical detail, which, however, would hardly be understood by the layman. Then he said: I printed that theory, although it was absolutely opposed to everything suggested or heard of before that time. I wrote the original book in English.'

criginal book in English."

"Why did you do that?" I asked.

"He explained that he preferred to write such scientific books in French, German or English, and said: 'I knew that if I were to write it in any of these three lan-



Fridtjof Nansen

guages, every scientist of repute must read it, inasmuch as any one failing to read such works would be considered behind the times. But, written in Norwegian, Hun-garian or other languages, scientific men would have the excuse of not being able

to read the work; so I wrote it in English. Nansen and His Wife.

"One time I said something about skating, and Nansen exclaimed, 'I haven't skated for seventeen years.' I remarked that it was about time he took it up again. Well.' he said. 'I am proud of my skating. but never get time for it any more. When I was sixteen years old I devoted much time to the art. I defeated the champion of Norway in a long-distance contest. I used to be quite fond of figure skating. and so was my wife. She is one of the finest skaters in Norway."

"In the old days it was a fashionable sport, and the place for skating was not Skarpsno, as it is row, but in Christiania harbor, opposite the ancient fortress 'Akershus Festning.' About 2 o'clock in the afternoon the pastime began, and al the young fellows and girls used to be out Nansen maintains that the Nor wegian skates are the best in the world for both figure skating and long distance I didn't see how they were adapted to fig-are skating. 'The kind I used,' he said. were flat as they rested on the ground, but very wide in the center, tapering toward the point and heel. When you get that blade on the lee and get over on the side you have a curve. The skate gives the when you lean over, and some very remarkable figures can be cut with them.

Ski Jumping.

"Nansen and his brother were born and lived at 'Froen,' their father's country place, in the outskirts of Christiania. There was a little bill there, where they made their first attempt at ski running. Snow shoeing in those days was almost entirely confined to the peasants. The two brothers took it up as a sport and began to get rather proficient, and tried going down hills. They found they could use them for going down, as well as for making excur-sions through the mountains. They dis-covered, at the suggestion of an expert jump on them. The peasants generally had never jumped with them, nor made much progress. The boys induced other fellows to take it up. In that way it became a sport in Christiania, and the Nansens did all they could to make it popular. Now the snow-shoe meeting in February is the great ski meeting of the world.

"There is a very steep mountainside at Holemkollen, with a sheer descent of about 45 degrees. Half way down there is a wal to degrees. Half way down there is a wain built up, and the snow curves out to the edge of the wall. The snow-shoers (skilobner) come down the hill at full speed. and when they strike this curve they shoot 30 feet in the air. The long jump record is 140 feet. When they again regain the ground there is no sudden jolt, but they continue in nearly the same direction down the hillside. Both feet come down about flat, and the knees are bent in order to land easily. I believe Nansen formed the first club of snow shoers in Norway, and he was very prominent in this club. The celebration of February 16 is a popular celebration of February 16 is fete. The king always attends.

Feats of the Ski-Hobner.

"Not only are the snow shoes wonderfu for jumping, but the skilled riders go through the woods, among the trees, winding paths, and even over the rocks. You would think they were going to dash out their brains as they go down a wild slope. In jumping down you imagine you are going to sink a foot in snow, but the long 'ski' hold the weight and you glide on. I remember once coming suddenly upon a precipice. For a moment I was frightened out I managed to throw myself down, and I swept around to one side before to the edge. The beginner can seldom tell how he will land; he may land with his feet in the air, head first in the snow. These skiers become very expert. They can climb fences with the ski on. The ski should be the length of the height of a man with his hands extended to full length, and are generally made of ash or pine. Narsen says he has walked on thi ice on his ski where dogs broke through

Visit to Nansen's Home

"Nansen is building a new house, near the one where he now lives, in the suburt of Christiania. It is a part of the large estate which belonged to his grandfather. It is on a hill near the Fjord and the place is only twenty minutes from Christiania. He lives very simply. His dwelling is a log house of the special Norwegian type made of small logs carefully joined gether. These houses are not finished nside with lining for two years after building, in order to allow the logs to set-tle permanently. It is surrounded by a palisade of rough pine. There are always two or three dogs barking around. From the front door of the house you enter into a small hall, covered with rugs, leading directly into the drawing room. Here is

portraits of well-known people hanging on the walls. There are paintings by Nor-wegian artists, especially by Otto Sinding. There is a small raised platform at one side of the room, and on it an immense carved sofa, like a throne, decorated with Norwegian rugs. They resemble old orien-tal rugs. At one side is the entrance to Nansen's studio, the most characteristic part of the house. It is built out from the main house itself. It has a roof of earth over the wood work, and greens and earth over the wood work, and greens and flowers grow thereon. It is a very large room; there is an enormous working table in the center and books in cases are all in the center, and books in cases are all around the sides. He has about every work ever written on arctic exploration, and many of them are remarkable works. There is one splendid set (a present made to him by his admirers in Great Britain) of all the English works on arctic explora-tion, made up in uniform binding. Ther he has every kind of relic that you can imagine, in the way of Eskimo clothing, weapons and fire arms, snow shoes, harpoons, etc. There is also a large fullength oil painting of his wife. The fire-place is immense. It juts out into the room and extends right up to the roof of the studio and is built of stone; about six feet high and nine broad. There is a door opening on to a little veranda and steps lead down to the grounds on the banks of the Fjord. His windows look out upon the Fjord, and his thirty-six-ton yacht lies opposite. It is named 'Wesle-moy,' which is the old Norwegian for 'litthe girl'—named after his daughter.

"Nansen is an accomplished linguist. He makes speeches in English, French, German, Latin and all the Scandinavian anguages. His degree of doctor of science is the highest degree conferred by Cam-bridge. There are but three or four be-side Nansen who have received this degree; Humboldt was one. The explorer is

ART AND ARTISTS.

probably the only one living holding the degree."

The exhibition of the Water Color Club, which is now in progress at the new gallery of the S. W. A., 1020 Connecticut avenve, was well attended during the early part of this week by those who were anxious to have a first glimpse of this noteworthy collection. The pictures will be on view until January 8, and the attendance is expected to reach its high-water mark in the closing days or during the holidays, when many people will be more at leisure. In addition to the regular daily hours from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., the gallery will be open on Monday and Thursday evenings from 8 to

On Tuesday evening the Society of Washington Artists met together for the second time in its new home on Connecticut avenue. Twenty-one members were present, and the annual election of officers took up all the time allotted for the meeting. Richard N. Brooke was elected president; George Gibbs, vice president; Wells M. Sawyer, secretary, and Charles Poor, treasurer. The following members were chosen for the executive committee of the ensuing year: Edmund Clarence Messer, J. H. Moser, Parker Mann, Robert Hinckley and Robert Coleman Child. Several names were proposed for membership before the adjournment of the meeting.

Mr. George E. Senseny a few days ago had on exhibition at Veerhoff's a very carefully studied figure composition. The artist is a young man who has never been represented in the local exhibitions and is little known here, but his picture referred to has excited no little interest. In coloring and in the handling his work shows in a noticeable degree the influence of Mr. Helmick, under whom he has studied, but individual peculiarities of style are not

Lucien Powell expects to have an exhibiion of his work at Veerhoff's shortly after Christmas, the collection to include a great variety of subjects. He has already placed in the gallery a large water color showing a market scene in an Italian town.

League it was decided to make a special feature of the Saturday morning class for children. While students of almost any age have been admitted to the preparatory antique class, no special effort has previously been made to accommodate the little ones. The services of two extra instructors will be secured for this class, and Saturday morning will be given over to the younger students. In Detroit, where this system has been in vogue for a good many years, it has proved of benefit to the stu dents, who started in at an early age, an as they grow older their drawing exces that of the other students. The importance of beginning any study early cannot be too strongly emphasized, and in drawing it is especially valuable, as even the youngest child can gain something through a shar-pened faculty of observation and in a certain manual dexterity.

For the holiday entertainment this year a couple of plays have been substituted in place of the Christmas tree, which was the source of so much enjoyment last year. Carroll Institute Hall has been secured for the evening of January 3, and the artists and their friends will take part in the two plays produced. Alma Tadema's drama, called "The Silent Voice," will occupy the first part of the evening, and the remainder of the time will be given up to a laughable farce called "My Lord and Livery." Music will also add to the enjoyment of the oc

Miss Lillian Cook has commenced work on the three large tapestries that she is painting for a convent in Wilmington, Del. All of the pictures are biblical in subject, the first of the series representing Christ blessing little children. It contains many figures, and is the most complex of all the canvases in its composition, the others Cook has not much more than laid in the colors on this tapestry, and will probably be occupied for series is finished. many weeks before the

Among the new pictures at Fischer's there is an especially attractive canvas by Sir Thomas Lawrence, showing three charming cherub heads. The heads are somewhat similar to Reynolds' arrangement of five different views of the same little maid, but the painting lacks a little of the sweetness and grace of Sir Joshua's famous work. The coloring is not the chief charm of this group by Lawrence, and it delights the beholder mainly by the expres sion in the faces. Other pictures now at Fischer's are the portrait by Watson Gor-don and Hilton's interesting imaginative

At Tyler's gallery, which has just beer opened on Connecticut avenue, there are a number of interesting canvases, both in landscape and in figure painting. The collection differs materially from similar ones that have been shown here in that it not composed of foreign pot boilers, but is largely made up of a good grade of

There was placed on exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery a few days ago a painting by Mr. Peter Baumgras, formerly of this city, now of Chicago, which is attracting considerable attention, and es pecially from scientists, both on account of its subject and the intelligent and careful manner in which it is treated. It is entitled, "Beauties from the Ocean," represents a brilliant collection of sea shells, the iridescent colors of which are reproduced with rare fidelity and success. Mr. Baumgras' old friends here will be pleased to learn that he expects to visit Washington next spring.

directly into the drawing room. Here is a grand plano, used especially by Madame Mr. F. P. Knott of New York is in the Narsen. In one corner is a bust of Nansen, by Lessing of Berlin. There are also 17th street, for some time.

French Brokers and Their Way of Doing Business.

But Sixty Members, and a Seat Costs Big Money.

A GOVERNMENT MONOPOLY

Special Correspondence of The Evening Star. PARIS, December 9, 1897.

SixTY-SIX COR-introduction columns gracefully support a broad portico al. around the great building, 230 feet square by 160 feet wide, and nearly 10: feet high, where the wild animals of the Paris stock exchange are parked off in a cage of their own. It was begun by

the first Napoleon, a the time when the Rothschilds were making their great fortune. He was great enough to see that the exchange of money was bound to be a power in the world which even enormous armies could not fight against. The place had before been occupied by nuns who bore the name of Daughters of Saint Thomas Aquinas. The revolution swept them clean from the face of the earth, and the money changers took their place and have held it ever since. Soon the Paris bourse took a definite rank among the nations. It became the great exchange between countries having chiefly gold and those which abounded in chiefly gold and those which abounded in silver. This continued until the adoption of the gold standard became fairly general, under the leadership of Prince Bismarck. It is still a reason why France looks favorably on the propositions of bimetallism. But it is the curious animation of the place, with its singular official customs, which must most have struck our commissioners—Senator Wolcott, General Payne and ex-Vice President Steveneral eral Payne and ex-Vice President Steven-son—in their recent visits to Paris to urge the French "to do something for silver." There is no more shouting than in Lon-don and New York, and no more horse-play, which breaks out wherever grown men get excited together and allow the old boyishness to burst forth. But the look of the place, the division of the brokers, the cutdoor part of it, like the cafe life of these exteriorized Frenchmen, is novel and, at first sight, a perfect riddle even to those most versed in the menagerie ways of buils and bears at home.

and bears at home. Only Sixty Real Brokers.

First of all, as in almost everything in France, there is a government monopoly at the Paris bourse. From the time of the first Napoleon only sixty men are ever terday licensed to buy and sell stocks on the floor. They stand inside a long space railed in to separate them from outside and unofficial brokers, cierks and spectators. In the center of their space there is a second circular railing, against which these authorized agents boister their backs and look calmly out on their fellows when they have some-

thing to sell.

The sixty men inside this "corbeille," or basket, are the "Agents de Change" of the Paris bourse, men holding an chicial position to which they have attained with difficulty, only on condition of paying \$500,000 and more when a place becomes vacant, and having fortune and experience which satisfies both the other members and the government liseif. The French Agent de Change is, therefore, a different man from Change is, therefore, a different man from one who buys a seat in the London or New fork stock exchanges. He is almost a government official as he leans over the railing which separates him from the outbrokers, any one of whom may be

richer and engaged in far greater opera-tions than himself. These official agents have a clerk piece, who arrives at the bourse a half hour before the work of the day begins. The agents' hours are strictly limited to derks at 11,30 transact the cash orders which they have received, as the lofty dig of the agents permits them to deal only in operations on a time limit. The day's average price is made up from the accounts of these clerks.

As sixty men cannot do at this end of he nineteenth century what they were unable to do even at its beginning, there is a great number of unofficial brokers to nelp them in handling the world's stocks These are not to be confounded with buck et-shop brokers; on the contrary, they are men of known position, and in many cases of equal importance with members of our own stock exchanges.

The Outside Men.

They are divided into three sets, only one of which is allowed to operate on th floor of the bourse, outside and to the left of the sacred railing reserved to the official agents. This constitutes the side market of French rentes or public funds.

The remainder of these unofficial brokers are relegated to the outside porch, with a roof, indeed, above their heads, but only the Corinthian columns to protect them from winds and drifting rain. There they form the two other recognized markets and it is their noise and antics, seen across the public place in front of the long step of the bourse, which gives the first pression of the Paris money market. One group forms a stock market in the promiscuous sense-that is, foreign public funds and bonds, foreign bank stocks, and a quantity of other stocks and bonds and new issues, many of which cannot be recognized by the official bourse. This mar ket subdivides itself into two cles to the left of the portico. On the righ the remaining market, noisier still-that

of cash operations.

All these non-official operators are called the "Coulisse" (slips), but not every one can sail in among them. They form disinct corporations, according to the market they deal, and are duly registere o facilitate the settling of their accounts They have to make a deposit of \$5,000 to be registered in French funds, and \$10,000 to the general stock market, which is noth ing if taken as a guarantee for the vast operations many of them enter into.

Where the Public Deals.

These "coulissiers" have also their clerks. running about with the little books on which they mote the operations, and by which disputes are settled. The clerks often do all the work, for the wealthy side broker may be far too afraid of colds and sore threat to trust himself to the open porch, where every one shouts togetheror seems to at least, to the puzzled onlooker. It is ne diess to say that the general public, when it desires to take a flyer at stocks, limits its dealings to these brok-

at stocks, mans he dealings to these prok-ers of the purch...

But there is yet another important class of financial agents living by operations at the Paris bourse who are still far removed from the discredit of the bucket shop. They are called "bankers," and it is their business to pass orders on to the brokers, whether among the sixty members or the coulissiers of the porch; and they see to the execution of the orders for their clients. They even require more ready capital than side brokers, whose operations are more purely speculative.

Finally come the "remisiers," a sort of general agents or drummers among the

general agents of druminers among the clients that speculate in stocks. They are paid either by the broker on the latter's commission or by the client on his profits. some of this latter class also are dent fortune, with an established

It would take an experienced eye to sep trate the crowd at the bourse into all hese different classes. The official agents in their railing, are obvious enough, and any man may go in to look at them. La dies must go up a staircase to an upper gal-lery, whence they can lock down; but the view has been obscured since the anarchist scares by a wire netting stretched across to prevent the throwing of bombs down on the heads of these rich "proprios." A man may also circulate freely on the porch; also he may attract the attention of these money

BUYING AND SELLING buyers and sellers, whose nerves are tense and only demand a moment of relief. Little Side Shows.

A tall American, thin, clean shaven, as the fashion now is among his countrymen. but is not in France, suddenly sees with dismay his tall and polished hat roll down the steps. Which of these yelling men-"six and a half, six and five-eighths"-has "six and a half, six and five-eighths"—has done it? He looks round in wrath ill-contained and receives general applause. If he gracefully accepts the situation, picks up his hat and walks placidly on the group which has once saluted him will not honor him with a second attention, not even on the day after, unless he is quite forgotten. But if he curses French manners he is likely to have his warm reception repeated at the hands of other groups, and so on until his temper has improved and he has learned to be once more a boy among these speculators, who are boys also—in their odd moments.

moments.
The usual French industries flourish along the borch. A woman has charge of the chairs, which the brokers draw up in squares and circles, according to the stocks they sell and buy. When the market is lively clerks and agents mount to look over heads and gesticulate in unison with their frantic cries and offers. Along the their frantic cries and offers. Along the side porches others retire to sit seside some convenient pillar and smoke or read their paper, or snooze in the sunny weather paper, or snooze in the sunny weather.

At the magic hour of 3 comes round the woman—only representative of femininity, otherwise so preponderant in French life—makes her way here and there and everywhere to collect the two sous which are her own little benefice on the operations of the day. A substantial broker, who has sold heavily at a profit, shows his light-some spirits by searching in vain for the copper coins which she demands of him in the shrieking tones that even woman uses in this curious place.
STERLING HEILIG. the shricking tones that even woman use

UNIVERSITY NOTES

Georgetown University.

The last lecture of the first term at the law school was delivered by Prof. Baker last evening. Beginning with yesterday examinations will be held in the junior, senior and post-graduate classes on the werk gone over during the past three months. The Christmas recess will extend from Thursday next until the first Monday

A special meeting of the Law School De bating Society was held Thursday evening. The debate, on the question, "Resolved That the Hawaiian Islands should be annexed to the United States," was decided in favor of Messrs. Schade and Brown, the

negative speakers, who had as their op-ponents Messrs. McCarthy and J. W. Bing-The Dramatic Club intends to take a trip to Baltimore some time after the Christ-

mas holidays.

On Washington's birthday the annual Merrick debate will be held. The base ball team intends to commence indoor practice as soon as possible. Richard Sheridan's "The Critic" will be presented by the Dramatic Society in the

near future.
The Philonomosian Society, at its last meeting, discussed the wisdom of the recent action of the Georgia legislature in prohibiting foot ball within that state. Messrs Henning and Duffy and Murphy and Gracey were the speakers on the affirmative and negative, respectively.

The examinations in mechanics for the senior class were held Thursday and yes-

B. J. Wefers of Georgetown will compete at the irdoor athletic meet to be held in

New York city.

Wednesday will be the last day this year on which attendance will be required of the students in the various classes. The lower classes will have their examinations immediately after the reopening on Jan

Columbian University.

The Call appeared yesterday for the second time this year. It is the intention of the editors, with the co-operation of the students, to enlarge the paper.

The Law School Debating Society will hold a meeting on Saturday, January 8, for the purpose of electing officers. A special negative, and the topic for the evening was "Resolved, That Cuban belligerency should be recognized by the United States. "Resolved, That Congress should enact a general anti-trust law," has been selected as the question for discussion this evening, and Messrs. J. P. Fontron, F. L. Tarbox and J. S. Reader will be heard on the af-E. Phelps and A. W. Patterson will up-A meeting was held last Saturday even

ing by the students of the Corcoran Scientine school, the purpose being to organize a class for the study of parliamentary law. The American Chemical Society will meet December 29 and 31 at the university.

The Glee, Panjo, Mandolin and Guitar
Club will hold a meeting Tuesday next. The Society for Philosophical Inquiry held a meeting at the university Taesday. Prof. Wiley did not lecture on Tuesday last, as was intended, but the address fo that day was postponed until next week. Some of Columbian's foot ball players will

probably participate in the game at National Park on Christmas. Catholic University.

The Christmas recess will extend from noon Thursday to January 4. General Greely delivered the last public ecture of the year Thursday on the subject, "The Gold Fields of Alaska." Commissioner C. D. Wright will inaugurate a course of addresses next year on "Political

Economy."

season.

dogmatic sermon last Sunday iclivered by the Rev. B. Haberstrough. Rev. Dr. Garrigan, the vice recto: preached a charity sermon in St. Paul's Baltimore, last Sunday. The Rev. Morris O'Connor, Rev. Edward O'Connor and Rev. Wm. Higgins, who are in deacon's orders, have left the university to go into retreat, preparatory to their ordination into the priesthood. Mgr. Conaty opened the course of lec tures at Villanova College, Philadelphia Wednesday night, the subject of his dis course being "The Duty of the Catholi-College Man in American Life." Next Sunday he will preach the consecration sermon at the dedication of the altars of St. Augustine's Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., his sub

Next Thursday evening Rev. Thomas J. University Club.
The Rt. Rev. Mgr. Conaty will celebrate the silver jubilee of his consecration to the priesthood on Tuesday, and it is his intention to return to his home for the event In honor of the occasion the students and faculty of the university tendered him a reception last evening. In response to addresses the rector expressed his gratifica-tion and pleasure at the regard manifested

ject being "The Necessity of Dogma in Re-

Howard University. The reserve foot ball eleven met an eleven from the Colored High School of this city last Saturday, and a game was scheduled for today with the strong Wayland team. This will probably be the last game of the

by the university faculty and students

Last Saturday evening the C. E. topic was: "One Thing I Have Learned From Paul's Life or Teachings," and J.B. Brown, the leader. Tonight the subject will be: "Our Sins, and How to Get Rid of Them." The December issue of the Journal will appear in a few days. Last evening's program at the meeting of

the Eureka was as follows: Recitation, Miss Scipio; declamation, H. W. Payne Laper, J. E. Smith; reading, Miss White-"Resolved, That Intempersell; debate, "Resolved, That Intemperance Has Been More Destructive Than War," with R. S. Pugh and R. H. Merriwether as affirmative and negative speak ers, respectively. Next week there will be no meeting.

The Alpha Phi Society, in order to ac-

custom its members to public speaking, pro-poses to give a series of public debates, the first to occur some time next month. "Magna Charta" was the subject of a pa-per read before that organization last

The holidays begin Thursday, the 23d in-stant, and continue until the first Monday of the new year.

Positive. Cholly-"Are you positive she is not in?"

The Maid-"l am; I'd lose my job if I wasn't."

HUNTING THE WREN.

ON THE ISLE OF MAN

Curious Customs That Are Still Observed at Christmas Time.

MANY ARE OF ANCIENT ORIGIN

Meeting of the Choirs in a Musical Competition.

THE HUNTING OF THE WREN

Written for The Evening Star. In Manxland, or the Isle of Man, a few practices of ancient origin are still observed at Christmastide, the like of which seem not to exist elsewhere.

The first reminder to Manxmen that Christmas is approaching comes from "the fiddlers," who commence to "call" every family of any consequence four or five weeks before the advent of the festive day. A party of two or three "fiddlers" set out about 3 o'clock every morning, excepting Sundays, playing all kinds of lively airs, it being the duty of one of the party to salute the families so honored by them in loud, distinct voice, after this fashion: "Good morning, Mr. Quayle; good morning, Mrs. Quayle; good morning, Master John (the eldest son); good morning all the rest of the family; past 4 o'clock; a fine, frosty morning." And so they continue from house to house, varying the salutation according to the members of the family and the weather, the state of which they never fail to mention. Boys and girls lie awake o' nights to hear the fiddlers; and some-times the former steal noiselessly out of the house and accompany the musicians on their matutinal tour.

Competition of the Choirs. One of the oldest customs in the Isle of Man is the meeting on Christmas eve of all the choirs of each parish in their respective parish churches for the singing of carols and Christmas anthems. Formerly these were rendered in the Manx language; and even yet this practice pre-vails in some of the country places, al-though in the majority of cases English is now used. In addition to the church choir, those of the Methodist and Primitive chaprivalry and excitement characteristic of political convention in the United States From about 10 o'clock until midnight the churches are crowded with the parishiontheir very best, not all together, but by turns and in a spirit of the warmest emulation. Sometimes, also, choirs from contiguous parishes meet in some particular church for the same purpose, and then the competition and excitement are still more intense. Tomultuous applause from their friends reward the efforts of each, for the Manx are a musical people, gifted with fine voices, and to an unusual degree endowed with the power of song. A kind of jury decides which choir is the victor, this one,

sought after. Singing Carols.

In the days gone by there was much drinking of jough, or Manx ale, both before and after the Oeil Verry, and it was considered fortunate if the affair did not end in a free fight between the partisans of the competing choirs. But tea drinking and social pleasures at home have taken the place of convivial meetings and angry discussions at the "public house." After the Oeil Verry the choirs set out at once to sing Christmas hymns before the residences of their respective church mem-bers, accompanied by crowds of young people of both sexes, who are drawn by the charm of the beautiful Christmas But outside the church gates and

separating they unite in singing, Christians, awake, salute the happy morn putting heart and soul as well as voice into the magnificent old melody, the strains of which are carried for miles As previously arranged, the choirs are entertained at some house with a sub-stantial breakfast during their tour of singing. No alcoholic beverages appear on occasions, their use being rigorously prohibited among church members out the island, where tea drinking in a thousand ways is a universal custom at both public and private functions. The result is that Christmas morning, notwith standing that every one then keeps open house, is unmarked by noise or disorder; and at 5 or 6 o'clock all go home to bed sober, happy and clear-headed, to snatch a few hours' sleep as prepartion for the coming pleasures of the day.

The Game of Camag. On Christmas day the unaccountable

practice prevails of indiscriminately shooting birds and game. On that day every person who possesses a gun seems anxious to use it. A unique insular sport called camag, somewhat like the English hockey, is also then indulged in by both men and boys. It is played with great

Christmas with the Manx terminates on St. Stephen's day, December 26, which is a national holiday. It is celebrated in a peculiar manner. Throughout the island peculiar manner. Throughout the island large parties of men meet together to hunt the hare, which is pursued over hill and dale with well-trained greyhounds, amid the wildest excitement. Nearly the whole adult male population turns out to witness these annual hunts, which last until sundown, and during which many of the wild mountain lands scoured and beaten to find "poor puss," the only remnant of the four-footed game once found abundantly in the island. Cor nected with this day also is the strange, mysterious custom called "Hunt the wren," the origin and history of which tradition alone offers any account.

The Celtic legend, which offers the only explanation of its existence, is as follows: once upon a time there lived in Man a terrible witch, who was forever contriving evil to the inhabitants. Her necromancies at length grew to be a scourge to the whole island, cattle dying and people perishing as if by a plague. At this juncture St. Patrick, who was then in Man, was appealed 'o, and he at once laid a curse upon the witch, by virtue of which she was transformed into a wren. In this guise she was hunted and pursued by those

whom she had so long persecuted, until she perished. And from that day to this

the custom of hunting the wren has been annually observed. St. Stephen's day is "Hunt-the-Wren day." But the tiny crea-

Hunting the Wren.

ture is mercilessly pursued for several days before by gargs of boys, armed with sticks and stores, being gibbeted after its death, and carried about the streets as if in decision

sticks and stores, being gibbeted after its death, and carried about the streets as if in derision.

The dead bird is suspended by the neck in the middle of a horizontal stick about three feet lorg, which is dressed gayly with ribbens of all colors and holly, and is supported with two upright sticks about the same length, all tied securely together, so as to represent an actual gallows. On St. Stephen's day it is carried about the streets and thrust against the windows outside, so that those within may feast their eyes with the symbol of their ancestgal but conquered enemy. The tooting of horns, the tinkling of triangles and the piping of tin whistles goes to complete a picture which, for very outlandishness, defies competition. This is the only surviving Manx custom of Celtic origin that bears about it any trace of cruelgin that bears about it any trace of cruel-ty. As in the case of the fiddlers, the boys beg money at the doors, saying, "Please give us something to bury the wren." The boys and the money together have contributed to keep alive this cus-tom, which is responsible for the practical extinction of the wren in Man, where the charming little bird once existed in coun less numbers. JAMES KERMODE.

BISMARCK AT HOME.

The Effect of Nervous and Rheumatio Pains on His Iron Constitution.

Berlin Letter to the Lendon Chronicle, It has been already sufficiently established that there was absolutely nothing to justify the recent unfavorable reports about Prince Bismack's state of health. The exchancellor now lives entirely in the past, and has little or no influence on the direction taken by current affairs. A peep, however, behind the four walls of his sim ple country chateau is always interesting, especially when his favored friends act as guides, by telling us how readily he dips into the inexnaustible treasures of his capacious memory, and relates in capfivating tone, with the eloquence of a master of conversation, stories from the rich experience of his active official life. Prince Bismarck still has an iron constitution, that enables him to enjoy the pleasures of life with a greater zest than generally falls to the lot of an octogenarian. He suffers, it is true, acutely at times from nervous facial and rheumatic pains, but, as with all men of gigantic energy, it is only when these attacks are unusually vio-lent that his temper and powers of en-joyment are perceptibly affected thereby. There is a good measure of novelty in the apparently monotonous daily life of Fried-richsruh. The lord of the chateau, de-votedly served by the dependents, his sec-

retary and his physician, who pays him occasional visits, rarely, if ever, shows himself before the midday meal, but then he is always in good form. Although, in meeting was called for Thursday evening.
The last meeting had as the speakers
Messrs. W. T. Harris, W. U. Varney and
E. C. Perkins, affirmative, and Messrs. A.
E. Snow, A. C. Wells and Granville Lewis, negative, and the topic for the evening or lunch with him, and Dr. Chysander, his secretary, often meets people at the sta-ticn to conduct them to the manor, in order that the prince may impart his views to the outer world. The venerable statesman thoroughly enjoys his meals, and it is a the outer world scathing glance of disdain that he turns from under his beetling brows on the individual who cannot take his share of the first-class brands of champagne, Moselle or Rhine wines which are brought up from the broad bins of the capacious cellar, or who declines to puff the priceless Havanas offered to him. At one of his parlia-mentary luncheons in Berlin, when he was in the zenith of his power, the prince was discussing with me the quality of a cigar CCunt Herbert had just given me, and remarked: "Ah, you are a lucky fellow to be able to smoke that cigar. I used to prefer cigar smoking, and smoked a lot of them in former for the prefer cigar smoking. however, receiving no prize. The honor of being declared the best choir is all that is of them in former days, but very strong ones. I am now only allowed the luxury of pipes!" The prince always smokes pipes, which are carefully and regularly filted and resilled for him by his attendant. A pictorial idea of the domestic life at Friedrichsruh is very well given in Ehler's wellknown sketches. The prince is fond of driving and walking, and is not always restrained from outdoor exercise of this kind by rain or otherwise inclement weather, and lucky, indeed, are those individuals who have the privilege of accompanying him, for he treats them to an incessant flow of conversation, didactic and narrative.

No public man ever excelled him in the power of sarcasm, which is at times ex-

ceedingly pungent and biting.

Few people are more delighted than Prince Bismarck at the receipt of gifts, and certainly nobody was ever favored with more liberal donations of all kinds. Barrels of Bavarian beer, the choicest wines from the Rhine and the Moselle, the finest salmon that come out of the rivers of the fatherland, catables and drinkables of the very best, are continually finding their way to Friedrichsruh from admirers at home and abroad. The best gardens and conservatories, also, are stripped of their choicest fruits and flowers, for Bismarck is also an ardent admirer of flowers. Roses he is particularly fond of, and I had an opportunity this summer of discovering that he preferred, above all, dark kinds. A he preferred, above all, dark kinds. A tastefully arranged basket of roses was ordered for him from a Hamburg florist, who dispatched them to Friedrichsruh under care of a young female attendant from She was ushered into the garden after the family luncheon, where the prince was admiring a fine young wild boar shot that morning by his keeper. The prince took the accompanying envelope and recognized the name of the donor, making a remark, with a smile, to one of his companions; then, visibly pleased, he turned to the basket of flowers and said: "How I love roses; and these are dark ones! Most people send me light-colored roses, but I much prefer these, and the color suits a man of my age infinitely better." With the capriciousness, however, of a much-courted beauty, the prince soon forgets his countless floral gifts, and the carefully devised attentions are not unfrequently left un-acknowledged, a neglect for which, however, he cannot be said to be personally responsible, as, doubtless, his instructions and wishes in this respect are not always carried out.

Great Wall of China.

From the Inversess Courier. This wall was recently measured by Mr. Unthank, an American engineer engaged on the survey for a Chinese railway. His measurement gave the height 18 feet. Every few hundred yards there is a tower 25 feet high. The foundation of the wall is of solid granite. For 1,300 miles the wall goes over plains and mountains, every foot of the foundation being of solid granite, and the rest of the structure solid masonry. In some places the wall is built smooth up against the bank, or crosses a precipice where there is a sheer descent of 1,000 feet



an invitation